

July 16, 2002

Mr. Albert Huntington, Mayor
City of Madison
101 W. Main Street
Madison, Indiana 47250-3775
(812) 265-8600

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO LETTER REQUESTING THAT NRC NOT TERMINATE THE
U.S. ARMY LICENSE FOR JEFFERSON PROVING GROUND (SUB-1435)

Dear Mr. Huntington:

I am responding to your letter of June 11, 2002, in which you express your opposition to the termination of the U.S. Army's license to possess depleted uranium at the Jefferson Proving Ground facility. One of your concerns is that the environmental monitoring currently being done by the Army will cease when the license is terminated. As part of the decommissioning process, NRC has the responsibility to make sure that the termination of a license will not have a significant impact on human health or the environment. NRC previously notified the licensee (by letter dated September 27, 2001), during an acceptance review of its decommissioning plan (DP), that an additional dose assessment for surface water and groundwater users off-site needed to be added. The Army submitted a revised DP and an Environmental Report (ER) to the NRC on June 28, 2002. NRC will review the revised DP to make sure this additional dose assessment is included. Until NRC is convinced that the modeling of potential off-site transport of DU contained in the DP is appropriately presented and there is no significant risk to human health and the environment, the licensee will be required to continue to collect environmental samples and the license will not be terminated.

Your letter also notes that in the past the Army was able to collect some DU for recycling but now states the remaining unexploded ordinance (UXO) make collecting any more DU too hazardous. NRC agrees with the Army that the presence of UXO severely restricts any attempt to collect DU.

Other areas of concern expressed in your letter include airborne DU migration off-site, DU transmitted to humans via the food chain, and impurities in the DU (such as transuranics) which may be even more dangerous to human health. These are areas of concern to NRC as well and the staff will review the revised DP to make sure they are included (see letter to Army dated September 27, 2001).

As stated above, the NRC has received a revised DP and an ER from the Army and is currently conducting acceptance reviews. The acceptance review process will take up to 90 days to complete. When the DP is accepted, a technical review will commence. Once a technical review of the DP is complete, NRC will start on an environmental impact statement. There will be several opportunities during this period for the public to participate in the review process through public meetings. The comments in your letter will be given to the technical staff during the review process to make sure your concerns are fully addressed. NRC appreciates your

comments and looks forward to working with other stakeholders on the decommissioning of the JPG site.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 301-415-5869.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Tom McLaughlin, Project Manager
Facilities Decommissioning Section
Decommissioning Branch
Division of Waste Management
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

Docket No.: 040-08838
License No.: SUB-1435

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Enclosure:

Letter to Army dated September 27, 2001

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